The Cheerful Letter

EVERY PLACE A CHURCH; EVERY DAY THE LORD'S DAY; ALL EVENTS BLESSINGS; ALL JOY THANKSGIVING; AND ALL NATURE AND LIFE FULL OF GOD.—*James Freeman Clarke.*

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THE CHARMER.

"*Socrates.*—'However, you and Simmias appear to me as if you wished to sift this subject more thoroughly, and to be afraid, like children, lest, on the soul's departure from the body, winds should blow it away.'

. . . . . .

"Upon this Cebes said, 'Endeavor to teach us better, Socrates. . . . Perhaps there is a childish spirit in our breast that has such a dread. Let us endeavor to persuade him not to be afraid of death, as of hobgoblins.'

"'But you must *charm* him every day,' said Socrates, 'until you have quieted his fears.'

"'But whence, O Socrates,' he said, 'can we procure a skilful charmer for such a case, now *you* are about to leave us.'

"'Greece is wide, Cebes,' he replied; 'and in it surely there are skilful men, and there are also many barbarous nations, all of which you should search, seeking such a charmer, sparing neither money nor toil, as there is nothing on which you can more reasonably spend your money.'"—(Last conversation of Socrates with his disciples as narrated by Plato in the Phædo.)

"We need that Charmer, for our hearts are sore
With longings for the things that may not be;
Faint for the friends that shall return no more;
Dark with distrust or wrung with agony.

"What is this life? and what to us is death?
Whence came we? whither go? and where are those
Who, in a moment stricken from our side,
Passed to that land of shadow and repose?

"Are they all dust? and dust must we become?
Or are they living in some unknown clime?
Shall we regain them in that far-off home,
And live anew beyond the waves of time?

"O man divine! on thee our souls have hung,—
Thou wert our teacher in these questions high;
But, ah! this day divides thee from our side,
And veils in dust thy kindly guiding eye.

"Where is that Charmer whom thou bidst us seek?
On what far shores may his sweet voice be heard?
When shall these questions of our yearning souls
Be answered by the bright Eternal Word?"

So spake the youth of Athens, weeping round,
When Socrates lay calmly down to die;
So spake the sage, prophetic of the hour
When earth's fair morning star should rise on high.

They found him not, those youths of soul divine,
Long seeking, wandering, watching on life's shore:
Reasoning, aspiring, yearning for the light,
Death came and found them—doubting as before.

But years passed on; and, lo! the Charmer came,—
Pure, simple, sweet, as comes the silver dew.
And the world knew him not,—he walked alone,
Encircled only by his trusting few.

Like the Athenian sage rejected, scorned,
Betrayed, condemned, his day of doom drew nigh;
He drew his faithful few more closely round,
And told them that *his* hour was come to die

"Let not your heart be troubled," then he said:
"My Father's house hath mansions large and fair.
I go before you to prepare a place:
I will return to take you with me there."

And since that hour the awful foe is charmed
And life and death are glorified and fair.
Whither he went we know,—the way we know,—
And with firm step press on to meet him there.

—*Harriet Beecher Stowe.*

THE WISDOM OF THE HEART.

The wisdom of the heart lies deep, and for most of us it is like precious treasure hidden in mines. We reach it by deep experiences, as we go on numbering our days; as we outgrow our surface follies; as we find our real selves by finding nature, humanity, and God,—that is, as deeper meanings open to us in all outward and inward facts; in short, as we become like little children, unprejudiced, docile, receptive.

The operations of the intellect—its direction and its force—are largely determined by causes that lie deeper than the intellect. How many of our judgments, think you, are unaffected by our feelings, our loves and hates, our interests or our wishes? If we care to have the intellect itself clear, strong, and correct, nothing would help us so much as a heartful love of the true, the right, the pure, the good. Such a love would direct the mind's eye in search of all best things, and would clarify the vision for seeing the best things, just as the passion for money-making sharpens the wit of a man like Jay Gould for seeing every chance for a rise or fall in the market for stocks. Wisdom comes not alone of intellectual training: it comes of the heart's loyalty to reality and to principle.

Now, what we want is to get the largest good which the days bring, as they come to us, one by one. They bring many gifts of varying value: we cannot take all. Alas, if we are not wise of heart! Alas, if our very affections reach out only to grasp at trifles! Emerson says: "The days are ever divine, as to the first Aryans. They are of the least pretension, and of the greatest capacity, of anything that exists. They come and go like muffled and veiled figures, sent to us from a distant and friendly party. But they say nothing; and, if we do not use the gifts they bring, they carry them as silently away."

Has he not made confession for us all? How many a time, as the glory of the sunset faded and the gray twilight grew, some sense of self-reproach has fallen like a shadow, as conscience whispered of wasted opportunity and unwise use of hours that could never return! And the secret of loss and failure lay all within ourselves, in our foolish choice of the second best.

In Bunyan's "Pilgrim's Progress" there is another telling illustration, where at the Interpreter's House Christian is shown a man with face to the earth, intently gathering sticks and straws, all unmindful of the beautiful angel hovering above and offering him a shining crown.

"Let us lift up our hearts!" That should mean let us elevate the range of our desires, let us care most for things most worth caring for. Then we should not only "covet earnestly the best gifts," but we should covet with equal earnestness to put all to best uses. The kind of interest we should feel in living would be immensely heightened; we should see all things and all people in a new light; and we should be quick to distinguish between matters which are of first importance and those which are only secondary or inferior.

Besides, there must be an affinity between the wise heart and all truth, between the pure heart and all purity, between the loving heart and the supreme Heart of Love, between the guileless heart and the holy perfection of God. About dogmas, or doctrinal forms, we may honestly and usefully differ: the same words may carry many meanings to those who really think alike. But the wisdom of the heart is one thing in all men, as light is one thing to all eyes, and air to all lungs, and health to all bodies.

This is the wisdom of the heart: Seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all kinds of good will follow as a matter of course.

But the year, like all years, is to be flooded with personal interests vital to our happiness, and destined to leave deep and lasting traces on our character. Three days ago, at a service held in memory of a beautiful life, I heard it said that death often makes one aware for the first time of the real character and qualities of his most intimate friend. Our loved ones are never so truly and clearly visible as after they have vanished from mortal sight. As the casket

closes, as the grave closes, the heart opens. The meaning of personality and the wisdom of the heart are partly learned in the school of bereavement.

But must we wait till our vision is clarified by tears before we can see each other? Why may not our common occasions, our daily contact, teach us the sweet lesson that at heart we are one? How many thousands of times, this very morning, in playful earnest, one has offered to another some special sign of recognition, some kindly greeting, like the wish for "A Happy New Year!" Every such greeting carries with it a personal tribute: it is our way of saying to the next man or woman or child: "The Creator has given you a place in his mind and his universe. He has invited you and me to be present here as his guests. We must show each other some courtesy out of respect to our gracious Host: we must make each other welcome."

O my dear friends, my more than friends! I do not forget that we are a church of God, nor that I am to-day entering on the fifth year of that ministry which links your past and present. Whether the history we are yet to make shall be sacred or profane, does it not depend on the state of our hearts? May it not depend in part on the sincerity of the consecration we renew at this very hour? Good seed sown here in bygone years has borne rich harvests. God help you and me to sow more good seed, in more good ground, that may yield golden grain and bread of life through all the ages to come.

Kneeling in spirit on the threshold of the new year, let us all unite in this prayer: that we may leave the dead past to bury its dead, and take our place at once in the beautiful order appointed for us; that our own movement through the days may be a kind of upward procession; that our growth may be steady and uninterrupted; that life itself may become more deep and divine, more rich and fruitful; that we may cheerfully pay the price of excellence; that we may have an ever-clearer understanding of the true object of existence and the right uses of our powers and opportunities; that we may take in and give out ever-larger measures of good; that all we have learned or may learn of God or Christ or the world or ourselves may nourish in us a more abundant and more worthy life. O Lord, our Lord, so teach us to number our days that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom! — *Charles G. Ames.*

THE STILL HOUR.

"MY TIMES ARE IN THY HAND."—PS. xxxi. 15.

Father, I know that all my life
  Is portioned out for me,
And the changes that are sure to come,
  I do not fear to see;
But I ask thee for a present mind,
  Intent on pleasing thee.

I ask thee for a thoughtful love,
  Through constant watching wise,
To meet the glad with joyful smiles
  And to wipe the weeping eyes;
And a heart at leisure from itself,
  To soothe and sympathize.

I would not have the restless will
  That hurries to and fro,
Seeking for some great thing to do
  Or secret thing to know.
I would be treated as a child,
  And guided where I go.

Wherever in the world I am,
  In whatsoe'er estate,
I have a fellowship with hearts
  To keep and cultivate,
And a work of lowly love to do
  For the Lord on whom I wait.

So I ask thee for the daily strength,
  To none that ask denied;
And a mind to blend with outward life
  While keeping at thy side,
Content to fill a little space,
  If thou be glorified.

And, if some things I do not ask
  In my cup of blessing be,
I would have my spirit filled the more
  With grateful love to thee,—
More careful, not to serve thee much,
  But to please thee perfectly.

There are briers besetting every path,
  That call for patient care:
There is a cross in every lot,
  And an earnest need for prayer;
But a lowly heart that leans on thee
  Is happy anywhere.

In a service which thy will appoints
There are no bonds for me;
For my inmost heart is taught "the truth"
That makes thy children "free,"
And a life of self-renouncing love
Is a life of liberty.

—*A. L. Waring.*

Let us lose no time in bewailing lost opportunities, nor in fancying that any act of ours has alienated, or can alienate, the divine love. Let us not imagine that any day in the future will be more favorable for leaving off any bad habit or for forming any good one than the present, nor that our surroundings afford any adequate excuse for the incompleteness of our lives. We say, "If only this weight were removed, if my burden were only some other, I could go on my way with a glad heart." This is only an appearance. It was not by chance that just that cross was laid upon you, that just that trial came to you. That you feel it so sorely shows how much you needed it. Every trial is a blessing in disguise. It rests with us to turn the rod of chastening into a staff upon which to lean. It is because of our own stubbornness that we are beaten with many stripes. God does not willingly afflict the children of men. Every parent knows that, to secure the best good of a child, it is sometimes necessary to thwart its wishes. It must learn many lessons it would gladly avoid if they would promote either its happiness or its usefulness. And shall we take it hard of our heavenly Father if he does not lead us up by our own way, if he turns us from the pursuit of mere personal aims, if, by restraint and denial and sorrow and loss,—by withholding what we want and imposing upon us what we do not want,—he is ever seeking to show us the better way, to emancipate us from ourselves, to bring our souls into harmony with his, and make our lives at one with his divine order?—*Celia Burleigh.*

THE BIBLE CLASS.

[We give here an extract from an extremely interesting article by Dr. E. E. Hale. Those who can obtain it would do well to read the whole essay. It was first printed in the *Christian Examiner* of September, 1858. For the benefit of those who have not read the extract from the same article, printed in *The Cheerful Letter* for November, 1892, we repeat Dr. Hale's suggestion to students of the New Testament in regard to the correct order of the narrative.

"Let the reader, after he has followed the life of Jesus as far as the end of the temptation, read John's Gospel as far as the twenty-first verse of the tenth chapter. Then let him read Matthew's Gospel, with or without the parallel passages in Mark and Luke. When he comes to the close, he knows that all the four are nearly parallel with each other."

Dr. Hale adds that "the only violent transfer that this order requires is postponing to the close of the Galilean ministry the sixth chapter of John," which is out of place, as he shows conclusively.]

THE ORDER OF THE GOSPEL NARRATIVES.

. . . Jesus, having entered on his mission, having passed through the preliminary training and trial of the temptation, proceeds almost immediately to Jerusalem, and in the most conciliatory way enters into confidential communication with the religious chiefs of the country, the men who are at the head of its religious establishments, who "sit in Moses' seat." These men are the head of the only hierarchy in the world which recognizes one unseen God as the only object of worship. It is a hierarchy which has its establishments, professing that faith, scattered all up and down through the Roman Empire, and far beyond it. It represents to the world the religion by means of which the most distinct prophecies of the new life have been uttered, God's noblest lessons taught, and the grandest hymns in his praise sung. To the leaders of that hierarchy Jesus goes at once, perfectly frankly, and to them first offers the gift of Eternal Life, which he brings to the world. What a shame that our scientific theology has made such demand on us that we should have to add that he makes this offer in good faith! They have the refusal of his apostleship offered them. If they choose, the veins and arteries of their system of communication to Greek and African and Asiatic synagogues and worshippers may receive the injection of the new life-blood, in which the whole world is to be made alive. The spirit of his movement is, indeed, precisely the spirit in which all his apostles—even the most radical—afterward worked, in ad-

dressing themselves first to the Jews, who were in every city.

The first visit made in this spirit to Jerusalem is that marked by the first driving out the traders from the temple, which, it is to be observed, meets with no opposition, and by the conversation with Nicodemus. There is nothing in the whole narrative of it which indicates any harshness shown by the Jewish elders toward Jesus. They are cautious, and he "does not commit himself to them." He only leaves Judea on some suggestion of a rivalry between him and John the Baptist, with whose mission he has no intention to interfere.

Leaving Judea, he makes the first revelation of himself as the Messiah to a Gentile woman of Samaria.

But he attempts no conversion of the people, and makes no appeal to them. Before attempting that, he gives the hierarchy another and yet another chance to work with him,—to take up his light and his fire. He goes up to Jerusalem to another feast, works the miracle of Bethesda, and the tone of the narrative rises, from describing the caution of the priesthood to their persecuting Jesus, and seeking "to kill him," without, however, describing any overt act of violence. Jesus walked in Galilee again, but still did nothing there, and said nothing which is on record. His appeal to the hierarchy was not yet fully made. The old order had not yet the full chance he meant it should have. At the Feast of Tabernacles, in the autumn, he makes a third and more imposing demonstration. In the midst of the feast he takes the place of the most learned scribe in the temple to teach. On the great day of the feast he cries, "If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink." This is a distinct culmination above any declaration he has made in Jerusalem before. On the other hand, it is met by a distinct order for his arrest, by excommunication of any disciples he may gather, and even by an effort to stone him in the temple. On his side, the three visits may be classed: first, as for private interview; second, open conversation with the leaders; third, public appeal and declaration in the temple at a great festival. On the side of the priests, the sequence is: first, indifferent caution; second, "they persecute Jesus"; third, they "take up stones to kill him," and cast him and his out from their company.

This series of efforts at Jerusalem marks the first of the three great subdivisions of his ministry. It is what the men who saw it thought unsuccessful. At every point and at every time when he met the Jewish leaders, they seemed to succeed. After the Feast of Tabernacles, when he went home to Galilee, they probably thought they had gained a notable success. He had come to Jerusalem with very few attendants, if with any. He had at this time no company of apostles; and this is the simple reason why the first ten chapters of John, excepting that sixth chapter which describes a later period, speak of none. The fishermen of Bethsaida, and their immediate friends, were, so far as we know, his only companions in travel, and the only disciples of his doctrine. We have no evidence, indeed, to show how many of them accompanied him in this opening of his work.

But, after this apparently unpromising beginning, an immediate change takes place in his movement and system of work, for which the Evangelists, in their own definite simplicity, give the cause. John the Baptist attracts the jealousy of Herod, who imprisons him. John the Baptist at this moment, and the memory of him probably for years after, fill a much larger place in the popular eye and in the eye of the politicians than Jesus does. His arrest and imprisonment are the signal to Jesus that the work of preparation is over. He has no more time to give to cautious or conservative priests. When he "had heard that John was cast into prison, he departed into Galilee." These words make the beginning of Matthew's narrative of the active ministry. They indicate an event which happened about the middle of what we know of Jesus' life. In other words, the Gospel of Matthew occupies itself with the Galilean ministry of the Saviour,—the second great subdivision of his active career,—while the Fourth Gospel has devoted nine chapters to what seemed his utterly fruitless demonstrations, addressed to the Jewish rulers and their satellites at Jerusalem.

[I shall be glad to answer questions from any one interested in New Testament study, and, when practicable, to lend books. Address Miss L. Freeman Clarke, Jamaica Plain, Mass.]

THE MOTHERS' COUNCIL.

WHAT SHALL WE PLAY TO-DAY?

Seventh Paper.

We have in the twelfth gift an appropriate and easy occupation for wee little fingers; namely, embroidery or sewing. The materials in their simplest form are cards, four inches square, of reasonably firm paper, pricked or perforated in quarter-inch squares, blunt-pointed "zephyr" needles, and sewing or embroidery silk. (I discourage the use of worsted, as it is difficult to handle, and the moth is apt to destroy the finished work.) Thread the needles, and tie the silk in by means of one knot drawn to the eye of the needle, and a card being given to each child, we are ready for work. There are two methods,—to fill the card with perpendicular, horizontal, or oblique lines or with the repetition of some figure, as the square or oblong, or else to start from the centre, working around a given figure, say a square, remembering our familiar rule,—top, bottom, left, right. For very small children I should modify the latter by pricking a design, and leading them to sew it, for the reason that this will probably give them the most pleasure. But this cannot be done until they have acquired a measure of dexterity in handling the needle, and have had some practice in sewing straight lines. Let me say to mothers that lines of some length, as an inch or an inch and a half, will be found most satisfactory, and for this reason cards pricked to the design are more desirable than those pricked "all over." There are many schools of sewing known to kindergartners, excellent in theory and rich in designs. I advocate an adherence to conventional forms here, as in the drawing, and for the same reason, to avoid the grotesque and misproportioned. As the little ones advance in skill, elaborate designs will be in order, and much artistic sewing can be done, especially by combining pricking and sewing. Take some flower or fruit design,—columbine, daisy, bunch of cherries or grapes,—and, having sewed the outline in the proper colors, proceed to *emboss* the leaves and flowers or fruit. The result will be most pleasing. The finished cards can be used as was suggested for the prickings; and many other uses for them will be devised, according to individual tastes.

ANNIE SWAYZE BRECK.

THE BOOK AND MAGAZINE CLUB.

[*Send all matter for this department to Mrs. Henry R. Hallett, 310 Harvard Street, Brookline, Mass.*]

GENERAL INFORMATION FOR GIVERS AND RECEIVERS.

1. If you see a book offered in the Book Club which you desire to read, write directly to the address of the person who offers it. If she receives more than one request, the addresses of those to whom she cannot respond may be sent to the Book Club, and the request printed there.

2. If you have a book or paper to give or lend, write directly to the Book Club as above, and offer it with your address.

3. In sending a book, enclose, when possible, a P.O. card for response, already addressed.

4. In thanking the person who has sent you a book, always mention the name of the book. Say, "I have received 'Black Beauty,'" or whatever the book may be; not, "I have received *that book*." This saves a busy person a good deal of time. Otherwise, she must consult her list constantly to find out what book has been received safely.

N.B.— Do not send books to the Book Club. Send only the *offer* to the club. To send the *book* involves packing it *twice* and paying postage *twice*, where once would suffice.

Those who offer books frequently receive notes, saying, "Shall I return you this book, or keep it, or pass it on?" *Unless otherwise stated, all* books offered in this department are *given*, and the postage paid.

Please remember, when you see a request for a book in the Book Club, to write a card to Mrs. Hallett, asking, "*Shall* I send such a book to such a person?" before sending it: else the person who requests it may receive several copies. When any one writes directly to you, asking for a book offered by you, send a card to Mrs. Hallett, saying that you *have* sent it. When you receive more requests than you can meet, send these to the Book Club to be printed there.

Please write only on one side of the paper in sending lists or letters to the secretary.

A four-pound package is the most that can be sent by *mail*. The postage on four pounds of *magazines* is 16 cts., on four pounds of *books* 32 cts.

OFFERS.

Will any mother who would like to have "Gentle Measures in Training the Young," by Jacob Abbott, or any one who would like "Black Beauty," address Miss Langmaid, 2 Gordon Terrace, Brookline, Mass.?

The Allston Branch of the Cheerful Letter Exchange offers the following books:

"Among the Hills, and Other Poems," J. G. Whittier; "Blue Ribbon," E. Tabor; "Old Curiosity Shop," C. Dickens; "The Captain of Company K," Joseph Kirkland; "April's Lady," M. Hungerford: "Vice Versa, or a Lesson to Fathers," F. A. Guthrie; "Last Essays of Elia," Charles Lamb; "Robert Elsmere," Mrs. Humphry Ward; "Allan Quatermain," H. R. Haggard; "He fell in Love with his Wife," E. P. Roe; "Christian Doctrine of Forgiveness of Sin," J. F. Clarke. Address Mrs. W. B. Nichols, 3 Webster Street, Allston, Mass.

The Plymouth Branch of the Cheerful Letter Exchange offer the following books: *Review of Reviews* for 1893; *Peterson's Magazine* for 1891; *Household* for 1894; "Sword of Damocles," A. K. Green; "Roundabout Papers," Thackeray; "In Memoriam," Tennyson; "Nile Notes of a Howadji," Curtis; "Song of Hiawatha," Longfellow; "Daniel Webster," Barnard; "Hoaryhead and McDonner," Abbott; "Merkland"; *New England Magazine* for 1893; "Letters from New York," L. M. Child; "Sailor's Sweetheart," Clark Russell; "Uarda," Ebers; "A Matter of Millions," Green; "Sabina Zembra," Black. Address Mrs. F. D. Davis, 2 Court Street, Plymouth, Mass.

Mrs. Reginald Foster, 44 Fairfield Street, Boston, will give and send the following paper-covered books for light reading: "The Blue Pavilions," Q.; "Our Bess," Rosa N. Carey; "Pretty Michal," Maurus Jokai; "Romance of Two Worlds," Marie Covelli; "Interference," B. M. Croker; "The Story of Philip Methuen," Mrs. J. H. Needell; "Mona's Choice," Mrs Alexander; "Her Season in Bath," Emma Marshall; "Dumaresq's Daughter," Grant Allen; "Miss Maxwell's Affections," Richard Pryce; "Little Mrs. Murray," F. C. Phillips; "Romance of Jenny Harlow," W. Clark Russell; "Part of the Property," Beatrice Whitby; "A Dangerous Catspaw," David Christie Murray and Henry Murray; "The Riversons," T. J. Bumstead. Odd numbers of *Century*, *Harper*, and other magazines, a few only.

I have to give *Ladies' Home Journal*, March, April, May, June, December, of 1892, January, March, April, of 1893; the *Cottage Hearth*, March, June, July, August, 1893; *Scribner's Magazine*, January, 1881; *Century Magazine*, November, 1892. I have also *Youth's Companions* from Sept. 22 to Dec. 29, 1892, with the exception of October 27. If any one can pay postage, shall be pleased to send them. Miss L. A. Hawkes, Pomfret Landing, Connecticut.

The following list is offered by the Cambridge Branch. Address requests to Mrs. William Cook, 71 Appleton Street, Cambridge, Mass.: *Educational Books.*—"Contes Populaires," J. H. Bouilly; Monroe's "First Reader"; "Progressive Fifth Reader"; Eaton's "Intellectual Arithmetic"; Chittenden's "Elements of English Composition"; "Natural Philosophy," W. G. Pech; Franklin's "Elementary Algebra"; Allen's "Manual Latin Grammar"; "French and English First Book"; Ray's "Elementary Algebra"; "The Organic Method of Studying Languages," French; Weld's "Latin Lessons and Reader"; Allen's "Latin Composition"; "Introduction to Geometry"; Jarvis's "Physiology"; Worcester's "Primary Spelling Book"; "Elementary History of the United States," Quackenbos; "Common School Algebra," Sherwin; "Illustrative Practical Arithmetic"; Worcester's "Pronouncing Spelling Book"; Swinton's "Language Lessons"; Hillard's "Second Reader"; Walton's "Primary Arithmetic"; "Intermediate Music Reader."

Miscellaneous.—"The Boy Inventor" (a memoir of Matthew Edwards); "The Canoe and the Saddle," Theodore Winthrop; "Marked Personal," Anna Katharine Green; "Bubbles and Ballast" (travels); *Success with Flowers* (magazines); "Forging the Fetters," Mrs. Alexander; "Four Irrepressibles"; "In a Grass Country," Mrs. Cameron; "Robert Elsmere"; "The Lamplighter."

The King's Daughters of Concord, New Hampshire, offer the following books, for which address Miss Gertrude Downing, 33 Pleasant Street, Concord, New Hampshire: "The Little Minister," "Two of Them," J. M. Barrie; "A Flat-iron for a Farthing," Mrs. J. H. Ewing; "The Story of Philip Methuen," Needell; "In the Heart of the Storm," Maxwell Grey; "The Story of a Country Town," E. W. Howe; "All in a Garden Fair," Walter Besant; "A Girl Graduate," Celia P. Woolley; "The Silence of Dean Maitland," Maxwell Grey. These are all paper-covered books, but in good

condition. We hope to send you another list before long.

I have the *Outlook*, formerly the *Christian Union*, and the *Housewife*, which I should be glad to send to some shut-in; but I cannot pay the postage on them, as I am already sending four others, and this has been an unusually hard year for us. But I thought there might be some one who would care for them who is able to send the postage. I wish I could pay it myself. Yours respectfully, (Mrs.) E. S. Morton, Hume, Bates County, Missouri.

I have the following books, which I will send to any one desiring them: "Saint Paul in Rome"; "Compendium of Useful Knowledge and General Information"; Murray's "English Grammar"; Hagar's "Elementary Arithmetic"; "Physiology," "Astronomy," "Chemistry," science primers; "Ocean Wonders"; "Poetical Works of Milton"; "The Childhood of the World." Address Miss K. Cortazzo, Meadville, Pennsylvania.

The following list is offered by Miss E. M. Ward, Hotel Brunswick, Boston, Mass.: "Christian Consolations," A. P. Peabody; "Imitation of Christ," by Thomas à Kempis; "Collection of Psalms and Hymns," by Francis W. P. Greenwood; the Bible in four small volumes; "The Song of Hiawatha," Longfellow; Tschokke's "History of Switzerland"; "The Expanse of Heaven," Proctor; "Paul and Virginia"; "Das Neue Testament"; "Les Aventures de Télémaque, Fils d'Ulysse"; "Domestic Cookery," Mrs. Lea; "Dixie Cookery," Mrs. Barringer of South Carolina; "Half-hour Recreations in Popular Science," by Dana Estes.

I have the following magazines and papers, if any one would care to have them and pay postage or express: *St. Louis Magazine; St. Nicholas*, 1890–91; *Ladies' Home Journal*, three years, 1889–91; *Table Talk*, 1889; *Home Maker*, 1889; *Dorcas Magazine*, 1887–89; *Ladies' World; Housewife*, 1888–91; *Peterson's* (odd numbers); *Self-help and Home Study; Journal and Messenger*, 1891–93. Address Miss Emma Shockley, 2330 Chestnut Street, St. Louis, Missouri.

(If those who wish some of the magazines in this list, will send Miss Shockley sixteen cents, they will receive a 4-pound package.)

I have a book of Psalms, very large type, which I will gladly give away. Address Miss Louise Howe, Linden Place, Brookline, Mass.

Mrs. E. H. Phillips, No. 11 Cone Street, Atlanta, Georgia, will give and send the following books: "Donald Ross of Heimra," William Black; "A Fascinating Woman," Juliette Lamber; "Grandfather's Chair" (a history for youth), Nathaniel Hawthorne; "Hypatia," Charles Kingsley; "Georgia Scenes," Major Joseph Jones; "Uncle Scipio," André Theuriet.

The *Examiner* and *Christian Inquirer* (Baptist weeklies) are offered by Mrs. Albert C. Hale, 551 Putnam Avenue, Brooklyn, New York.

"The Dwellers on the Nile" and "Babylonian Life and History." These are volumes in the new series of books for Bible students, called "By-paths of Bible Knowledge." Would be interesting to a minister or a student. Also "The Christian Doctrine of Prayer" and "Christian Doctrine of the Forgiveness of Sin," by James Freeman Clarke; Economic Tracts, Nos. 9 and 16, "The Progress of the Working Classes in the Last Half-century," "Taxation: A Plain Talk for Plain People"; "The Subjection of Women," J. S. Mill. Also Nursery Health Tract on the "Feeding of Young Children"; two years of *The Mother's Nursery Guide*, formerly *Babyhood;* the *Unitarian* for 1891, 1892, and 1893. Address Miss L. Freeman Clarke, Jamaica Plain, Mass.

REQUESTS.

Some good general reading is asked for by Mrs. Henry Dexter, East Haverhill, New Hampshire (she is young and in ill health); Golden Wallace, East Concord, New Hampshire, sixteen years old; and Mrs. Moody Belknap, Lisbon, New Hampshire.

Will you please send me a Bible of large print? I have weak eyes, and I have been a shut-in ten long years. I also ask for some books for my two children. Our boy is fifteen, and our girl is twelve years old. They would prefer stories. We are poor people, and live in the country, with no

money to buy any reading with,—no, not even the necessities of life. If you can send these books free, I will be glad to receive them. Address Mrs. Martha W. Guy, Germantown, Kentucky, Box 5.

I received a copy of *The Cheerful Letter*. I can't think who was so kind as to send it to me. I have seven small children. The oldest is twelve years, and the youngest is three months old; and then my mother is with me. She is seventy-eight years old, and is fond of reading. My oldest is a boy, who is fond of reading; but it is hard to buy it with so many little ones. Would you please send me some magazines or any good books for children? Address Mrs. Charles Seifried, South Trenton, Oneida County, New York. P.S.—I received three books some time ago. Many thanks to the kind stranger.

(It would have been better if Mrs. Seifried had mentioned the *names* of the books received.)

Have you any books or other reading matter which you can send to our Sunday-school? We have only a very few books, and would be pleased to receive some from you, if you think desirable. Yours, Mrs. Kate M. Eastman, N. Hyde Park, Vermont.

Mrs. K. D. Stafford, Bradford, Texas, asks if any one can send her for her children two books which she enjoyed very much when she was a little girl. They were published in the South, and called "Young Marooners" and "Marooner's Island." She also asks for "Wide Wide World" and "Stepping Heavenward."

I feel grateful for the privilege of enrolling my name upon your list of subscribers. Have been selfish enough to subscribe in my own name, but do promise to keep it going on its mission of good. As soon as I read every word, I will pass on to whoever I have chance of sending it. This is a noble work, and, like many similar, liable to be imposed upon; for some who are able to subscribe and pay for books will thoughtlessly accept such gratuitously. I want the aid of our circle in helping a community of good poor people to a little Christmas treat in shape of simple works of fiction and Santa Claus style. They are people far away from church, Sunday-school, or influence of social kind to help; too poor to buy. Pictures add so much to the simple, untutored mind. I refer you to Mrs. M. C. Lawrason, our most intelligent, prosperous, and esteemed neighbor. I will enclose some postage for the parcel of Christmas books for my poor neighbors. Mrs. Mary E. Wicker, Wicker, North Carolina.

(The editor hopes that there are not many who, being able to procure books for themselves, would ask for those offered to the sick and poor. But we thank Mrs. Wicker for her caution.)

I have just received the December number of *Cheerful Letter*, and understand that Mrs. W. P. Webb has subscribed for it to be sent to me for the year 1894. I am, indeed, delighted with it; and I thank God that there are big-hearted Christians in the world who are *anxious* to do something to brighten the lives of their less fortunate sisters. I am not a shut-in, in the sense of *invalidism*. I was formerly a happy wife and mother, the centre of a large home circle. Am now, by the death of my kind husband and scattering of my loved ones, left lonely, poor, and unhappy in my declining years. The brightness has all gone out of my life; and, but for my abiding faith in Christ, I feel that I could scarce exist. I am a great reader; have been all my life. Reading is the only unalloyed pleasure left to me. I would be so thankful if you can send me "Stepping Heavenward" and "In the Golden Days," or any good literature would be thankfully received. Mrs. H. A. Hayes, Union Level, Mecklenburg County, Virginia.

("In the Golden Days" is such a very depressing book, we hope something more cheerful may be sent.)

Seeing a request in *The Cheerful Letter* for the names of mothers of young children living on ranches or prairies, I will send in mine. I am a young mother with three little girls, and live out here on this Western prairie, where we are denied all social privileges or access to a library. So a little reading would be so thankfully accepted, to help pass this lonely winter. Yours sincerely, Mrs. S. B. Blaisdell, Kent, Wilkin County, Minn.

Will you please send me some good readings? I would like *Ladies' Home Journal*. I should appreciate good reading very much.

We live in a lonesome place. I have poor health and a little babe to care for, so I seldom get out from home. We have no library here, so, if you can help me to reading, you will greatly oblige. Mrs. J. D. Hinckley, Box 18, Sand Creek, Lenawee County, Michigan.

Mrs. Maria Souther, West Levant, Maine, sends the following names of people in her neighborhood who would like reading: Mrs. Ellen Sweetser, West Corinth, Maine; Mrs. Evvie L. Bodge, West Levant, Penobscot County, Maine (has five children under eight years of age); Mr. Benjamin Parkhurst, Hartland, Maine, living alone, seventy years old. Mr. Wm. Hasey, Kenduskeag, Maine, seventy years old, desires illustrated reading; Mrs. Lucy M. Hewes, West Levant, Maine, Box 13. Mrs. Souther also asks to have *Harper's Young People* for a boy, whose address she will give upon application.

The *Christian Register* is asked for by Mrs. W. F. Hadley, P.O. Box 61, Mount Vernon, New Hampshire; Mrs. E. R. Sturges, North Platte, Lincoln County, Nebraska; Miss Harriet Martin, Sublette, Lee County, Illinois.

Mrs. Lottie Curtin, Olympia, Washington, asks for "Uncle Tom's Cabin," "Gates Ajar," and some reading for her children. She has five boys, the eldest eighteen, and one girl of fifteen.

I have been an invalid eleven years. I would like *Godey's Magazine* or *Demorest's*, "Uncle Tom's Cabin," or magazines of any kind, or bound books. A Bible with coarse print I need especially. I am very lonely. We have no children, as we lost our only child; and my husband is compelled to do farm work, and I what we have done in the house. All the books you may send will be acceptable. I do not care for many novels. Yours very respectfully, Mrs. H. W. Brown, Kinde, Huron County, Michigan, Box 11.

Dear Mrs. Millet,—I live in Plankinton, South Dakota. I go to school, and study Harper's "Fourth Reader," Conklin's "Grammar," White's "Arithmetic," and Barnes's "Geography." We are working fractions. We had very cold weather, but it is lovely now. We have a cow and some chickens. My brother Fred, aged nine, has care of the chickens. I am eleven years old. I will be twelve on the 20th of December. I have care of the cow. We sell milk to Mrs. White, and I carry the milk. Sometimes it is very cold. My brother and I set rabbit traps, but we have not caught any rabbits yet. I have some tools, and I can make a few things. I have a little sister, aged seven, named Florence. My mother goes out nursing, and she leaves us alone nights; and we are always glad to see her in the morning. Yours truly, Henry C. Diehl.

P.S.—I would be very much obliged for some papers. Plankinton, Aurora County, South Dakota.

(Mrs. White, referred to in Henry Diehl's letter, says, "He is a worthy little fellow, and I know that good, interesting reading would be appreciated." *Our Dumb Animals* is being sent.)

Miss Florence Criste, Madisonville, Ohio, asks some one to send her *Demorest's Magazine* after reading, and promises to pass it on.

I should like to have one of the following books: "The Lamplighter," "Wide Wide World," "The Newcomes," "The Pearl of Orr's Island." I hope you will not think I am asking too much. We live so far from town that sometimes it is too late to send from *The Cheerful Letter*. I should be so glad to have any one of the books or some other book or magazine. Your shut-in friend, (Miss) Mamie Gunning, P.O. Box 284, Cushing, Woodbury County, Iowa.

Mrs. Elizabeth Posey, 1017 Central Avenue, Olympia, Washington, asks for "Uncle Tom's Cabin" and "Stepping Heavenward."

A lady who has been sending *Outing* and the *Unitarian* to Mr. Gila, Cold Spring, Missouri, and is obliged to discontinue her subscription, asks for some one to take her place in sending these magazines.

I am very thankful that there is such a paper as *The Cheerful Letter*. By reading it, I know it is doing much good in the world. Many a man and boy, no doubt, is kept from the saloon and hotel through your papers and books. Now, if it will not seem like begging, I would like to ask for "Bible Studies" for 1894, covering the Sabbath-school lessons by Dr. George F. Pentecost. I had it for 1893, but am too poor to buy it. I live at home with my father

and mother. Her health is poor; and my father has not been able to read a word in ten years, so I have to read aloud. And, if you have any religious stories, such as "Ben-Hur," or "Josiah Allen's Wife's" stories, to spare, I should be *very, very thankful;* but I think most of the "Bible Studies." May the Lord bless you! Helen A. Jones, Box 35, South Trenton, Oneida County, New York.

Mrs. C. A. Procter, Slocumville, Rhode Island, would be glad to know who sends her *The Cheerful Letter*. She lives in the almshouse. There are seven others; but nearly all are weak-minded, so that she has little companionship. She is confined to her bed three-quarters of the time, with a complication of painful disorders. She would like to receive letters, and will answer if postage is enclosed. She has "lots of reading," and will gladly pass it on to any one who will enclose postage.

The *Ladies' Home Journal* is asked for by Mrs. A. Wirths, Burrsville, Ocean County, New Jersey; Mrs. Sarah Kirkpatrick, 1703 Broadway, West Troy, New York; Mrs. Addie Merrell, St. Francis, Cheyenne County, Kansas; Mrs. C. S. Stowell, Magnolia, Boulder County, Colorado; Mrs. R. H. Berger, Longford P.O., Kansas; Mrs. Nannie Cable, Pactola, South Dakota; Mrs. James A. Dilley, Silver City, South Dakota; and Miss Lulu M. Thompson, Taluin, Virginia. Miss Winifred Bridge, Dade City, Florida, asks for "Five Little Peppers." (She is about twelve years old.)

Mrs. C. E. Deuel thanks, through *Cheerful Letter*, the person who sent her a book called "Good Luck." There was no address with it.

LETTERS.

In looking over October number of *Cheerful Letter*, I saw your list of books to be had for the asking. I have written several times for books offered, but so far have received neither books nor answer, so I thought I would give one more try.

My list in December *Cheerful Letter* has been drawn on till the books are exhausted. I still have the magazines, and will be pleased to mail them to the first caller. I would like to have "Self-culture," by James Freeman Clarke, and any or all of Scott's works. I have been looking for a book of instruction in pen-and-ink drawing for some time. I am entirely helpless, with exception of my right arm. I am lifted from my bed to my wheeled chair, pushed to my stand table at the window. My wife puts everything I need in reach before going out to her work; and there I sit till bedtime, reading, writing, or dreaming the hours away, and so one day follows another, and will until the end. I never get tired of reading; and I like books that not only amuse, but instruct. My education is limited, and I would like to improve it as much as I may. Would like to have all the works on composition I can get. I am only forty-eight years old, and may live many years. With the exception of $10 per month pension for wounds received in the war of the Rebellion, my wife is the bread-winner. I would like in some way to aid her, as she is not over-strong and liable to break down at any time; and we both dread to become a charge on the county. Yours sincerely, William Sheppard, 331 Court Street, Charleston, West Virginia.

(The editor thinks that perhaps Mr. Sheppard's kind offer of books, which caused his letter to be printed among *offers* in December *Cheerful Letter*, has prevented his previous request from being noticed. He has sent his books to those who were able to pay postage. See December *Cheerful Letter*. "Self-culture" and a novel of Scott have been sent.)

Some time ago I wrote to Mrs. Millet for books and magazines which I found advertised in *The Cheerful Letter*. Since that time we have received books and papers from a number of persons; and we desire to offer through your columns our sincere thanks for the same. We have enjoyed reading them very much. We feel that they have been both interesting and entertaining to ourselves and children. I have one copy of *The Cheerful Letter*, the April number for 1893. It has been useful to us.

This is the dullest Christmas I ever saw. The drought in this country has completely destroyed the Christmas festivities. We had our first good rain night before last, which has revived our spirits considerably; and farmers will go to work with renewed

energy. Please address all mail matter to Dingler, Comanche County, Texas, and all freight to Comanche, Comanche County, Texas. Wishing you and all interested in your good work a merry Christmas, a happy New Year, I am most respectfully yours, W. T. McClatchy, Dingler, Comanche County, Texas.

P.S.—I forgot to mention that W. L. Mosely, who applied to you for books, has left this country. I would like to tell you that I have divided reading matter with my neighbors, some of whom have enjoyed it very much. I lend books or papers wherever I think they will do good or be appreciated.

Answer to Puzzle in January Number.

Resin, siren, Erin's, reins, risen.

IMPORTANT NOTICES.

Observe the change in the name and address of the secretary of the Book Club.

Observe the new rule in regard to sending a reference, when asking for books.

Our Book Club department has grown so large that we shall ask of all who, in the future, write to us for books, to send the name of some minister, as a reference; when possible, the minister of the church to which they belong.

Our object being more especially to give good books, we shall be obliged to omit requests for other articles. Such requests are often printed in the *Housewife* and in the papers of shut-in societies.

We have also found it best to omit requests for remembrances to be sent on birthdays.

Want of space obliges us to decline offers of original verses.

We frequently receive letters asking for pecuniary aid or its equivalent. To give such help as this is out of our power, and would alter the character of our society. In future, when such appeals are made to us, we shall endeavor to send the address of the writer to some one living in the same town, as a personal visit is the best means of meeting cases of actual necessity.

The request for books from the two boys in Dade City, Florida,—Master Ben Grey and Tom Clark,—has received a most generous response. It is not necessary to send them more at present, as they are amply provided. Before sending books again to Dade City, will our friends kindly communicate with the Book Club secretary? By this means an equal distribution of reading will be more easily arranged.

The same notice may be given in regard to the sons of Mrs. Ida Latson in Olympia, Washington. Before sending more books to Olympia, please write to the Book Club secretary. Unless some such rule is followed, some families receive a great many books, and others very few.

Will the person who wrote to Miss Langmaid from Greenville, South Carolina, asking for a copy of "Black Beauty," please send her name to Miss Langmaid, as it was omitted in the request?

There will be a meeting of the Cheerful Letter Exchange workers at 25 Beacon Street, Boston, Friday, February 2, at 10.30 A.M. All interested are cordially invited.

MISCELLANEOUS.

SECRETARY OF CHEERFUL LETTER EXCHANGE,—Miss Bertha Langmaid, 2 Gordon Terrace, Brookline, Mass.

TREASURER OF CHEERFUL LETTER EXCHANGE,—Miss Louise Howe, 25 Beacon Street, Boston, Mass., or Linden Place, Brookline, Mass.

EDITOR OF "CHEERFUL LETTER,"—Miss L. Freeman Clarke, Jamaica Plain, Mass.

SECRETARY OF BOOK CLUB OF CHEERFUL LETTER EXCHANGE,—Mrs. Henry R. Hallett, 310 Harvard Street, Brookline, Mass.

Subscriptions and renewals may be sent to the treasurer as above. The subscription is fifty cents a year.

Notice that requests for membership and for correspondents go to Miss Langmaid, our secretary; requests for books and offers of books, to Mrs. Hallett; and to Miss Clarke only articles for insertion in the paper (not Book Club matter). All such material should be written on *one side only* of the paper, and sent by the first of the month *before* that in which it is printed.

Those not able to subscribe for the paper, but desiring to receive it, may do so by writing to Miss Ellen R. Dewson, Quincy, Mass. Please give full name and address. Many of our members take the paper, in order to send it to those who are not able to subscribe for it.

Will all subscribers or receivers of *The Cheerful Letter*, whose copy does not come regularly, or comes not correctly addressed, be kind enough to notify Miss Bertha Langmaid, 2 Gordon Terrace, Brookline, Mass.?

Send also all notices of *changes of address* to Miss Langmaid. Please do not send these notices to the editor, as it causes delay in the correction.